

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE HUMANITIES**



**SAMPLE APPLICATION NARRATIVE**

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Grants to Preserve and Create Access to Humanities Collections  
Institution: Library Company of Philadelphia

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**PROJECT DIRECTOR**

Mr. James N. Green  
Librarian  
1314 Locust St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
UNITED STATES

**E-mail:** jgreen@librarycompany.org  
**Phone(W):** 215-546-3181  
**Phone(H):**  
**Fax:** 215-546-5167

**Field of Expertise:** History - American

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**INSTITUTION**

Library Company of Philadelphia  
Philadelphia, PA

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**APPLICATION INFORMATION**

**Title:** *Access to Uncataloged Early American Imprints in the Library Company Collections*

**Grant Period:** From 5/2007 to 4/2009

**Field of Project:** History - American

**Description of Project:** The Library Company of Philadelphia, an independent research library for the study of early American history, seeks funding to make accessible some 2,884 pre-1820 American imprints, primarily ephemeral publications and popular books, that are uncataloged (or inadequately cataloged) in national data bases and have not been included in Readex's digital collections of Early American Imprints. Newly created or substantially upgraded catalog records will make these imprints accessible by the usual points of access (author, title, and subject) but also by others that will facilitate advanced research. Once they have been cataloged, Readex intends to digitize these imprints at their own expense and publish them, along with fully searchable OCR text, as a supplement to their Early American Imprints series; the records created by this project will serve as the primary means of access to the digital images and texts.

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**BUDGET**

<b>Outright Request</b>	\$124,800.00	<b>Cost Sharing</b>	\$126,535.00
<b>Matching Request</b>		<b>Total Budget</b>	\$251,335.00
<b>Total NEH</b>	\$124,800.00		

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**GRANT ADMINISTRATOR**

Mr. James N. Green  
Librarian  
1314 Locust St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
UNITED STATES

**E-mail:** jgreen@librarycompany.org  
**Phone(W):** 215-546-3181  
**Fax:** 215-546-5167

## **Access to Uncataloged Early American Imprints in the Library Company Collections**

The Library Company of Philadelphia seeks funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities to make accessible some 2,884 pre-1820 American books, pamphlets, and broadsides. These are imprints that are uncataloged or inadequately cataloged in national data bases and have not been included in Readex's digital collections of Early American Imprints, Series I, Evans, 1639-1800, and Series II, Shaw & Shoemaker, 1801-1819. Most of these imprints are unique in the sense that no other copy is known in public collections. They include imprints belonging to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania that are on deposit at the Library Company. Most of them were acquired after Readex finished filming imprints in the 1970s; many were acquired in 2000 with the Michael Zinman collection of pre-1801 American imprints. Once they have been cataloged, Readex intends to digitize these imprints and publish them along with fully searchable OCR text as a supplement to the Early American Imprints series.

These 2,884 imprints include every genre of print, but for the most part they are ephemeral pamphlet and broadside publications and books that were so popular that all other copies have been handled and read repeatedly until they disintegrated. Taken as a group, they will significantly expand our knowledge of the popular print culture of early America; and they will add substantially to the digital canon of Early American Imprints. Catalog records and microform images of most early American imprints have long been available, but the Readex digital collections are for the first time allowing historians and students to search online every word of nearly every imprint published in the United States through 1819. This resource is revolutionizing the study of early American history.

Newly created or substantially upgraded catalog records will make these imprints accessible by the usual points of access (author, title, and subject) but also by others that will facilitate advanced research, such as date, place of publication, printer, illustrator, genre, physical characteristics, and they will record and index copy specific information such as inscriptions, provenance and binding. The resulting catalog records will be freely accessible worldwide in the Library Company's online public access catalog, WolfPAC, as well as in the online OCLC/RLIN database. They will also be the means of access to the fully-searchable digital text published by Readex, which will be available in hundreds of research libraries both in the U.S. and abroad.

The Library Company, founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin, is the oldest public library in America and is today one of the pre-eminent research libraries for the study of early American history. It holds approximately half a million rare books, manuscripts, and graphics. Its collection of pre-1801 American imprints is the second largest, after that of the American Antiquarian Society; and it holds nearly a quarter of all known 1801-1819 imprints. It has been one of the largest contributors to the Readex microform publication of pre-1820 American imprints. This project will make available for the first time some of the unique printed materials the Library has acquired over the past forty years, and will also make the collection as a whole better known to scholars, students, and the general public.

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## **Access to Uncataloged Early American Imprints in the Library Company Collections**

### **Project Narrative**

#### **1. Significance of materials**

##### **A. Description of the materials**

The 2,884 early American imprints included in this project are uncataloged or inadequately cataloged in national data bases and not included in Readex's digital collections of Early American Imprints, Series I, Evans, 1639-1800, and Series II, Shaw & Shoemaker, 1801-1819. Thus they have not been included in what has become in effect the canon of early American printing, sometimes referred to as our national printed archive. Most of these imprints are unique in the sense that no other copy is known in public collections. Thus the most important feature they have in common is that they are not accessible to scholars and the public. None of them has been cataloged under the auspices of the North American Imprints Program (NAIP) at the American Antiquarian Society (AAS), and to make sure there is no future duplication of effort, the records created by this project will be made available to AAS and NAIP.

The imprints include every genre of print (except newspapers, magazines, and separately published intaglio prints, which are not part of the Early American Imprints series). However, the vast majority of these unrecorded imprints are ephemera, such as broadsides and pamphlets, and small popular books. That is simply because full-sized bound books survive much more often in multiple copies and have long been known to bibliographers. Their survival is often directly due to the fact that they were issued bound, because binding preserves books, and both confers and reflects monetary and cultural value. When unrecorded imprints come to light, they are much more likely to be unbound materials, or else small, fragile books in formats associated with cheap popular reading material.

Pamphlets in this period were much less peripheral than they are today, in the sense that they often contained writing of considerable importance and influence, such as sermons, religious tracts, political arguments, and reports of civil and religious bodies and voluntary associations. Even though they were not bound, they were usually stitched together and often protected with stiff or decorated paper wrappers that helped preserve them. Indeed many pamphlets were preserved when they were later bound up with other pamphlets, either by booksellers or individual owners. This investment was a mark of their somewhat more lasting value. Perhaps the most ephemeral of all pamphlets -- and the most ubiquitous -- was the almanac. Almanacs were read over and over again and then thrown away at the end of the year, as calendars are today. Yet even almanacs were saved as mementoes and sometimes bound up, especially when they were used as diaries.

Broadsides and other single sheet imprints were more ephemeral than pamphlets and are more numerous in this collection. Some broadsides were printed on one side and meant to be posted on walls, but many others were printed on both sides to be circulated by hand or by peddlers. They were the cheapest of all forms of print and the most rapidly

disseminated. The Declaration of Independence was first printed as a broadside and sent by mail to other printers who printed broadsides of their own, spreading the text everywhere in a matter of days. The impact of most broadsides, however, was limited to a brief period of time and a limited geographical area. They capture a slice of life as it was lived, unedited for posterity or for outsiders. The range of texts that typically appeared in broadside form included doggerel ballads, advertisements, official decrees, news extras, amateur elegies, election tickets, auction catalogs -- the list is endlessly diverse.

Blank forms are another quite different type of single sheet imprint. Usually they were legal documents, the sort that contained enough standard language that it made sense to have them printed rather than written out over and over again by a law scrivener. Examples are leases, deeds, bills of lading, powers of attorney, wills, mortgages, and debt bonds. Other kinds of blank forms included membership certificates, lottery tickets and paper money. These documents were printed in huge numbers, they often wielded tremendous authority, and as long as they retained their power, they were carefully preserved. Evans and most subsequent bibliographers have included them selectively in the canon of early American imprints, recording only those imprints they deemed for some reason important. For example, the Oath of a Freeman, the first American imprint (Evans 1) was a blank form, of which no copy is known. Digital Evans includes 286 blank forms, and this project will more than double that number.

Among these there are also many bound books that are otherwise unknown today because they were so popular they were handled and read repeatedly until they disintegrated. The most obvious examples are small format Bibles, New Testaments, Psalters, and prayer books. These were the most highly valued and commonly owned books in early America. Even more numerous in this collection of unique imprints, however, are bound books that were not highly valued, or at least not as often preserved, inherited, and rebound. These were books that expressed a kind of print popular culture, analogous to non-print forms such as dance, song, needlework, handicrafts, foodways, games, parades, and the like. These books were not just a way to pass the time. They were guide books to the perplexities of life, and reading them alone or in groups helped shape individual and community identities. Popular printed materials are crucial to the study of American history, especially in this pre-1820 period when America emerged as the world leader both in literacy rates and per capita production of print.

## **B. Book History Context**

The pamphlets, broadsides, blank forms, and small, popular books that make up the bulk of this collection are in fact entirely representative of the output of the colonial and early national press. Full sized books bound in leather were the exception. This is not because of any technological limitation. Printers printed sheets, which were all the same size, usually about 20" x 30", and they could be issued just as they came from the press, as large broadsides, or cut up to make small broadsides or blank forms, or folded and stitched to make pamphlets, or folded and sewn together in bundles to make books. From the printer's point of view, the only difference between a handbill and a book was the number of sheets involved. For many years paper had to be imported at considerable

expense, but the first American paper mill was erected near Philadelphia in 1690, and by the end of the colonial period the problem was not a shortage of mills but of the raw material of paper, linen rags. Type manufacture was much more complicated and slower to cross the Atlantic, but by 1800 the United States was nearly self-sufficient in that too. Producing books involved bookbinders, but that was a trade that was even less mechanized than printing, and there were binders even in towns with no printers.

The scarcity of full-sized books in early America was due not to technological limitations but to a chronic shortage of capital. The largest cost in any printing job was the paper, and papermakers had to be paid in cash up front, whereas book sales were slow, especially in America where the population was scattered and most books were sold within a short distance of their place of publication. Binding was the next largest expense, so publishers had books bound in small batches as sales required. Large capital outlays up front and slow returns made book publishing inherently risky, so the few books that were published had to be small in size with small type and narrow margins, all to reduce the amount of paper, and also bound as cheaply as possible, either in sheep or in wooden or cardboard covers with leather only on the spine. Most of all, they had to be books that were proven popular and sure to sell quickly. Despite its limitations, or because of them, the output of the American press in the 18th century was rich in cheap books and popular print.

From the 1790s on, the economy, the population, and the communications infrastructure of America expanded dramatically, and the American book trade expanded too. The first step was importing huge cargoes of books, often with generous credit, as British publishers tried to regain the market they had lost during the Revolution. But American booksellers took advantage of this generosity by investing the money they made from these sales in publishing books of their own, sometimes without bothering to repay their British suppliers. The books they published included a few original American works, but mostly they were cheap reprints of the very books they had been accustomed to import. They did this so energetically that soon the market was glutted, and many went bankrupt, but in the process they made books plentiful in America for the first time. This was the period when reading became a source of pleasure as well as education and self-improvement for the majority of people, and increasingly American popular culture was embodied in print. The unique imprints included in this project after 1800 are more likely to be leather-bound books, as the physical characteristics of popular reading material changed, but they are just as likely to be cheap and fragile. Some have vanished altogether, and many more are known today in only single copies -- or so it seems at least, because as we will see below, our national imprint bibliography becomes abruptly much less comprehensive after 1800.

### **C. Humanities Themes and Issues Addressed by the Material**

In 2004 the Library Company mounted an exhibition called "From the Bottom Up: Popular Reading and Writing in the Michael Zinman Collection of Early American Imprints." It featured 117 broadsides, pamphlets, and bound books, of which 62 are unique and otherwise unknown, and it focused on genres of print culture purporting to

emanate from the middle and lower orders of society rather than from institutions or individuals of wealth and power. We say “purporting” because the exhibition began with the first broadside printing of Franklin’s *Way to Wealth*, a text that perfectly confounds the distinction between “top down” and “bottom up” by using homely proverbs and a folksy persona to preach economy, frugality, and the prompt payment of taxes. The exhibit then went on to examine ten genres of popular print, associating each with a number of themes and issues:

1. A section on *Death* included many broadside elegies, the poetic form most often adopted by people who did not habitually write verse. Most were elicited by sudden or violent death, and they represent an individual or community struggling to find some meaning or redemption in tragedy.
2. A section on *Captivity* included violent and sensational narratives, some fictive and some not, by survivors of abduction at the hands of Native Americans and others. Early American readers were frightened by the captives’ ordeals but also reassured by the fact that they lived to tell the story, and by their assertions of cultural, religious, and racial superiority.
3. *Crime* literature, including several “last words and dying speech” broadsides sold at executions while the ink was still wet, was explored in another section. They were full of lurid details and designed to reassure people that justice had been done and that their community had been purged of evil.
4. *Ballads*, one of the oldest forms of popular entertainment, were printed for and sold by itinerant hawkers, who sang the tunes as they sold the words, an early example of the commercialization of popular music. Most are directed at a youthful audience, judging by their themes, such as the clever youth who deceives his elders, or the greedy parents who thwart the wishes of their children who are in love.
5. Some ballads were mildly risqué, but the only actual *X-Rated* book in the peddler’s pack was an ancient book that purported to reveal the facts of life, *Aristotle’s Master-Piece*, represented by two hitherto unknown editions of 1773 and 1793. The book has been studied extensively by historians of sexuality, gender, medicine, and folklore.
6. Peddlers also sold slightly disreputable books of popular *Entertainment*, including books of jokes, which both expressed and subverted existing hierarchies by putting voice to oppositional ideas, and dream books, which gave the illusion of power by telling people how to predict the future or read a person’s character.
7. Most writing about *Politics* was by men with privileged access to printers and the support of political parties, but evidence of popular political activities such as protests and parades can occasionally be found in ephemeral printed handbills and petitions.
8. The principal character in much early American popular literature was the *Devil* in his many guises, and often he was illustrated in woodcuts, complete with horns, a barbed tail,



and -- inevitably in a racist culture -- skin dark as ink. These woodcuts were fascinating even to those who could not read the text.

9. Very little is known about the reading and writing practices of those *On the Margins* of society, so every piece of evidence is valuable. In this, the largest section of the exhibition, the display presented such treasures as the earliest known American woman's bookplate, the earliest book known to have belonged to a slave, a hitherto unknown printing of the first poem by the enslaved poet Phillis Wheatley, and the earliest American woodcut representation of a Native American, on the seal of Massachusetts.

10. Finally, eighteen magnificent posters advertising the services of horses at stud, many of them illustrated with woodcuts, were displayed. They anatomize an obsession with horses as pervasive as our society's obsession with automobiles today, and they offer a glimpse of the language and customs of the stable, the racecourse, and the horse fair, among the few places where men of different classes and races mingled.

This is just one example of the many humanities themes that can be explored in this collection of popular printed materials. (A partial catalog of the exhibition is at <http://www.librarycompany.org/zinman/> )

#### **D. Opportunities for Research in this Collection.**

Despite being in private hands and relatively inaccessible until five years ago, the Zinman collection has already had an impact on historical and literary scholarship. Several unique imprints have been the subject of scholarly articles. The first American scientific illustrations appeared in a 1697 book on eclipses, and they were first described by Mr. Zinman's librarian Keith Arbour in "The First North American Mathematical Book and its Metalcut Illustrations," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 123, numbers 1/2 (1999): 87-98. A fragment of an otherwise unknown poem by the Puritan poet Edward Taylor was the subject of an article by Thomas M. Davis, "Edward Taylor's Elegy on Deacon David Dewey," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 96, part 1 (1986): 75-84. An unrecorded Franklin imprint was described for the first time in Keith Arbour, "Corrigendum to Miller: Benjamin Franklin's 1740 edition of Watts's Psalms of David," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 90, no. 4 (1996): 497-501. An unrecorded 1789 circular letter calling for a Bible printing cartel started a wave of competing ventures that marks the beginning of the American publishing industry, according to Library Company Librarian James Green's account of "The Rise of Book Publishing in America, 1790-1840," in the second volume of *A History of the Book in America*, forthcoming from the University of North Carolina Press.

The "Bottom Up" exhibition mentioned above and other publicity (including a profile of Mr. Zinman by Mark Singer in the February 5, 2001 *New Yorker*) have led to a marked increase in inquiries about research at the Library Company from all quarters. This impact has been especially noticeable in applications for research fellowships. The incoming 2006-2007 class of fellows includes six who have cited pre-1820 printed ephemera among the sources they expect to consult at the Library Company. Simon

Finger will be looking at mortality bills and public health emergency notices for his Princeton dissertation, *Epidemic Constitutions: Public Health and Political Culture in the Port of Philadelphia, 1740-1800*. Dr. Peter C. Messer of Mississippi State University will be using our large collection of Revolutionary era ephemera for his forthcoming study of the committees of correspondence, *Revolution by Committee*. Francois Weil, Director, Centre d'études nord-américaines, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, will make good use of our collection of broadside family records for his book *Family Trees: A Cultural History of Genealogy in America*. Joshua Beatty, Ph.D. candidate at William and Mary, wants to make use of our Stamp Act ephemera for his *Performances of Authority: A Cultural History of the Stamp Act Crisis*. Dr. Daniel Hulsebosch of the New York University School of Law will use our blank legal forms in his book *Writs to Rights: The Transformation of the Anglo-American Common Law in the Age of Revolution*. Jenna M. Gibbs, History, UCLA will use our "Jump Jim Crow" theatre posters and our "Bobalition" broadsides (which satirize the annual Boston African American celebrations of the end of the slave trade) in her dissertation *Imagining Race, Rights, and Citizenship in Transatlantic Theatricality (1770s-1850s)*. Finally, Candice Harrison will be relying heavily on advertisements and broadside proclamations for her Emory dissertation, *The Contest of Exchange: Place, Power, and Politics in Philadelphia's Public Markets, 1770-1859*.

Since the fellowship program began in 1987, nearly 450 fellows have come to the Library Company to do research, resulting in over 100 book publications and almost as many articles in scholarly journals. (The total number of readers over this period has averaged about 2,000 per year.) **Attachment 5** provides a list of book publications by former fellows who made use of ephemera and popular books printed before 1820, including imprints we now propose to catalog. The list provides an indication of the range of research projects these materials can support.

## **2. History of Project**

### **A. Library Company collections**

The Library Company was founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin, to serve as Philadelphia's public circulating library. It has never been tax-supported – it was and still is funded by contributions from shareholders – but it has always been open to the public. In this sense it is the oldest public library in America, and until the mid-19th century it was the largest. In the 1890s it ceded the public library function to the tax-supported Free Library, and in the 1950s it was refounded as a research library for the study of American history and culture from the beginnings to the end of the 19th century. Nearly all the books it acquired from 1731 until 1880 are still on the shelves, and they constitute a comprehensive and authentic representation of American print culture during that period.

From the 1950s until the present, the Library Company has devoted itself to preserving and making accessible its historic collections and to augmenting them, most intensively in the period before 1820, and then up to 1860 more selectively in subject areas such as African American history, women's history, economic history, and social reform, especially in the fields of education and philanthropy. In 1965 the Library Company

moved to a new building next door to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), and shortly thereafter it accepted on permanent deposit their unrivalled collection of early Pennsylvania imprints. Since the 1950s, the Library Company has made the collections of both institutions available to all relevant bibliographic projects, print and electronic, as well as to all imaging projects, microform and digital. Most of the materials we now propose to catalog are not included in the national bibliographies, data bases, and imaging projects simply because they have been acquired too recently to be included.

## **B. The Michael Zinman Collection of pre-1801 imprints**

In 2000 the Library Company acquired the Michael Zinman collection of Early American Imprints, some 11,500 books, pamphlets, and broadsides printed in the thirteen colonies and the United States through the year 1800. It was the largest such collection assembled in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and larger than all but a handful of institutional collections. Not counting a great many duplicates, the Zinman collection added roughly 5,000 imprints to the collections of the Library Company. Including materials on deposit from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania we now hold about 17,500 pre-1801 U.S. imprints, second only to the American Antiquarian Society, which has about 22,000. The total number known is over 40,000.

Mr. Zinman is a New York businessman who makes his living selling used heavy machinery, such as electrical turbines and earth-moving equipment; but his real vocation is collecting books and other printed materials. He has built and disposed of several book collections over the years, but in the early 1980s he decided to focus his efforts on early American imprints, setting out to acquire every one available in the market. For over a generation there had been no new private or institutional collectors in this field, and the established collections were all selective in one way or another. Historical societies only collected imprints from their localities. The American Antiquarian Society (AAS) is not limited by geography, but at that time their long-standing policy was to collect only one copy, the best available, of any imprint. Private collectors preferred high spot books, such as Revolutionary imprints and famous Federal period documents; and like most institutional collectors, they eschewed defective imprints, that is, those that were lacking even so much as part of a leaf, or that were dirty or ragged. Mr. Zinman was omnivorous. He would buy anything, even if he already had a copy; he had as many as 19 copies of one imprint. He found that many booksellers had boxes of “cripples” that they had stopped trying to sell; and many libraries had what they thought of as inferior duplicates for sale. He bought them all. Many collectors still preferred early American books that were washed and rebound in morocco, and perhaps “perfected” with leaves from another copy, with all traces of previous owners erased, unless of course they were famous. In many cases the “defective” or “duplicate” imprints Mr. Zinman acquired were in their original bindings or wrappers with layer upon layer of evidence of previous ownership.

Antiquarian booksellers love collectors who will buy anything in some easily identifiable category. Thus if a bookseller came across a new and rare imprint, Mr. Zinman was more likely to get a quote than someone whose collecting policies were more complicated. And he did not flinch at a high price if the imprint was really rare. When he began collecting

imprints, they were relatively plentiful, but over a period of about twenty years, in large part due to his own collecting, they became more and more uncommon. He was also something of a pioneer in collecting tastes, so that now practically everyone agrees that original condition is better than prettiness, and that comparing so-called duplicates can vastly increase our knowledge about the production and dissemination of what were still hand-made, pre-industrial artifacts.

Another aspect of early American imprints that made them ideal for Mr. Zinman's style of collecting was how exhaustively they have been cataloged – three times over, in fact, first by Charles Evans, whose chronologically arranged *American Bibliography* (1903-1959) fills fourteen volumes; then by the American Antiquarian Society as part of the publication by Readex, Inc, of a microform edition of the full text of every imprint (1962-1968); and then again by AAS's North American Imprints Program (NAIP), which began in 1979 and continues to the present with generous funding by NEH. With each iteration, the known universe expanded but also became more sharply focused. It is now possible to locate not only a copy of almost every imprint but also *every copy* of every imprint held in the main public collections. And it is now possible to know in an instant if a given imprint is the same as the one cataloged or somehow variant; and if it is not found there at all, it can be legitimately described as "unrecorded."

Early on in his collecting Mr. Zinman obtained a read-only copy of the NAIP data base, but in order to be able to make additions and corrections to it, he had to copy it into a data base manager called DB-Text Works. To this he added information about copies he acquired, carefully noting variations from the NAIP record. He also added a complete register of holdings at other libraries gleaned from NAIP and a variety of other sources, information that is not available on the public version of NAIP. This enhanced data base, which he calls Zinnaip, quickly allows the user to see where other copies can be found, and Mr. Zinman and his librarians were constantly corresponding with and visiting libraries to compare copies, which resulted in many emendations of NAIP records. (Zinnaip is also easier to search and more versatile than NAIP, because every field, including location of copies, can be searched by key word with and-or-not operators.) His investment in Zinnaip was enormous, and one of its many payoffs was that it allowed him to concentrate more systematically on collecting imprints that were unrecorded or that were different from or more complete than recorded copies.

In the course of this comparison of copies, Mr. Zinman was frequently in touch with staff at the Library Company. From about 1990 on it was a rare day that did not bring a phone call or a letter from him. When he decided to sell his collection in 1999, he first tried other libraries with larger acquisition budgets, but for different reasons in each case, a sale was not concluded. Finally he decided the collection should go where it would be valued and where it would have a transformative impact, and so he proposed to the Library Company a gift/purchase arrangement with payments stretched over many years. As it turned out, the Zinman collection and the collections of the Library Company dovetailed well. The Library Company is by no means a local or regional history collection, but taking account of the Historical Society's Pennsylvania materials, it is far stronger in imprints of the middle Atlantic, whereas the Zinman collection's great

strength is in New England imprints. Thus the acquisition made the Library Company's collection both more national and more nationally significant.

Paying for it turned out to be much easier than expected. Before the acquisition had even been publicized, and before we had a chance to make a formal application, the Barra Foundation of Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania sent a check for \$1 million. Many individuals and foundations followed suit, including the William Penn Foundation and the estate of Paul Mellon. Meanwhile, with the help of Zinnaip, it was easy to identify duplicates, some of which were sold to a number of institutions through an antiquarian bookseller intermediary. Because of the Historical Society's early imprints on deposit, the Library Company already had many Evans duplicates and a rich sense of how much can be learned from them. Duplicate copies in the Zinman collection were retained wherever there was the slightest bibliographical variation or any copy-specific feature of importance. Retaining so many duplicates greatly reduced the amount of money realized from sales but preserved as much as possible of the research value of the collection. Since the collection was acquired in 2000, Mr. Zinman has continued to add to it, with even more attention to unique and variant imprints and to imprints not held by the Library Company. These additions total almost 600 imprints. They have been treated as deposits, but in 2006 they will be converted to gifts.

### **C. Digital Evans and Shaw & Shoemaker**

Charles Evans published the first volume of his chronologically arranged *American Bibliography* in 1893; when he died in 1939 he had published twelve volumes, which took the work through the middle of 1799. After the Second World War, his work was carried through 1800 by the American Antiquarian Society, and Roger Bristol of the University of Virginia published a supplement of imprints Evans missed. In 1955 AAS in partnership with Readex, Inc. began to publish a microform edition of the full text of every one of the 49,197 imprints in Evans and Bristol. This project was completed by 1968. In 1979, taking advantage of new technology, AAS began to produce machine-readable catalog records in MARC format for every Evans period imprint. Then in 2002 Readex, now a division of NewsBank, Inc., using another new technology, began to reissue its microform series of pre-1801 American imprints in fully-searchable digital form, using OCR image managing software. Because it is based on the microform set, Readex includes nothing acquired by the Library Company after 1968, when the Library was just beginning to build up its historic collections.

In 2005 Readex began to issue a continuation of Digital Evans, also from microform images, based on the bibliography of some 50,000 1801-1819 imprints by Ralph Shaw and Richard Shoemaker, published in 19 volumes from 1958 to 1963. In the preface to the first volume the compilers acknowledged that their bibliography was "gathered entirely from secondary sources," including the notoriously unreliable and incomplete 1930s WPA inventories. Thus it omitted many imprints even then readily available in research libraries, its entries are often so abbreviated that it is impossible to identify an imprint with any certainty, and it was especially weak in recording broadsides and ephemera, which was one of Evans's great strengths. For all its deficiencies, Shaw &

Shoemaker, as it came to be known, was good enough that no more complete and accurate bibliography has even been funded. The Readex microform edition of Shaw & Shoemaker imprints, published between 1964 and 1982, was another heroic accomplishment, but it did not add any imprints to the canon established by the bibliography. This trend was continued when Stanford University received a grant to create stripped down MARC catalog records for all 50,000-odd 1801-1819 imprints. Unfortunately the records were based on the microform images rather than actual books; and again it has been difficult to get funding to improve these records.

The difference in the completeness and accuracy of the bibliographic record between the Evans period and the Shaw & Shoemaker period has been reinforced by standard library cataloging practices. The date 1801 has long been used as a formal or informal dividing line for cataloging standards. The Library of Congress treated all pre-1801 imprints differently from later works, a practice codified in 1981 in *Bibliographic Description of Rare Books (BDRB)* and its 1991 revision, *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Books (DCRB)*. Some libraries used hybrid practices, apologetically applying some portions of DCRB rules within the body of an AACR2 record, or using DCRB through some later date or for hand-press books regardless of date. As a result, the national cataloging databases are full of records that range from thorough and well-crafted to brief and inadequate. As libraries turned to retrospective conversion to complete their online catalogs, pre-1801 imprints were sometimes singled out for fuller treatment while works from 1801 on received the usual out-sourced conversion process, where 19th-century imprints are matched against re-keyed catalog cards created well before AACR or BDRB. These retrospective conversion records were sometimes loaded into the national cataloging utilities, perpetuating inaccuracies and a lower standard of cataloging.

The Library Company's holdings for the Shaw & Shoemaker period are nearly as strong as those in the Evans period, almost a quarter of all the 50,000-odd imprints known. Those recorded in Shaw & Shoemaker were gleaned from incomplete WPA catalogs, whereas Evans had worked with actual books in the library; and again nothing acquired or identified after the 1960s was included in their bibliography. Unfortunately 1801-1819 imprints are still poorly cataloged in our online catalog WolfPAC, largely because of the poor quality of the records available online, so it is not as easy to pinpoint imprints that need to be cataloged or upgraded.

#### **D. This Project**

Using WolfPAC and Zinnaip, we have been able to identify 2,884 pre-1820 imprints that are uncataloged or inadequately cataloged in national data bases. The goal of this project is to catalog or recatalog these imprints to the highest national standards. These records will be available nationally in OCLC/RLIN as well as in the Library Company's online catalog WolfPAC. It should be emphasized that the purpose of this project is not to catalog all the Library Company's pre-1820 imprints, which number over 30,000. We are not even proposing to catalog the Zinman collection as such. Most of those imprints are already cataloged in Zinnaip, and by the end of 2006, the cataloging data there will have been converted to MARC format, with all copy specific features recorded, in a

conversion project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. We are only concerned here with imprints not fully cataloged in nationally accessible databases.

Naturally we are eager to add these uncataloged imprints to the digital canon of early American printing, so we approached Readex and proposed working with them to produce a supplement to both their Evans and Shaw & Shoemaker series, consisting of imprints at the Library Company. Readex enthusiastically agreed. Once this project is completed, they intend to create, entirely at their own expense, digital images of every one of these 2,884 imprints, linked to a fully searchable OCR text. The MARC records created by this project will be the primary means of access to the digital images, which will be available to subscribers world-wide.

### 3. Methodology and Standards

#### A. Locating records for cataloging, Evans period, pre-1801

The source for cataloging records for pre-1801 imprints will be Zinnaip, Mr. Zinman's enhancement of the North American Imprints Program (NAIP) database. NAIP records the holdings of the Library Company (LCP) and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on deposit at LCP (HSP) fairly accurately, and since 2000 LCP and HSP holdings not recorded in NAIP have been added to Zinnaip by Library Company staff. Zinnaip also records Mr. Zinman's holdings, as exhaustively cataloged by his librarians. **For sample Zinnaip records, see Attachment 10.** Imprints not in the Evans bibliography or its print supplements are noted in Zinnaip as "Evans 0." Imprints not in the Readex microform series and therefore not in Digital Evans are noted in a separate field as "Not on Readex." (A printout of sample Zinnaip records is appended.) Many imprints are in Evans but not on Readex because Evans saw a copy or had reason to believe one existed, but at the time of filming no copy could be found. A search for the holdings of LCP, HSP, and Zinman, limited by both of these "Not" terms, enables us to pinpoint the records in need of cataloging. Some of these records have already been cataloged by AAS, for example, in cases where Mr. Zinman sent a Xerox of a broadside to AAS and they cataloged it. AAS records were created to the highest standard, usually with NEH support, and there is no need to upgrade them. AAS records can easily be eliminated by adding their code in the "cataloging source field." This search brings up results in the following number of imprints.

Not in Evans or Readex (not AAS):	392
In Evans but not Readex (not AAS):	<u>376</u>
Total	768

368 of these imprints are from the Zinman collection and 400 were already owned by LCP and HSP. The Paraprofessional Cataloging Assistant will locate these imprints, and the Project Cataloger will catalog them. (See below **4. Work Plan.**)

## B. Locating records for cataloging, Shaw & Shoemaker period, 1801-1819

The source for catalog records for the 1801-1819 period will be the Library Company's online catalog, WolfPAC, which also includes the pre-1820 holdings of HSP on deposit. It is composed of records created in the MARC format by LCP catalogers since 1987, many of them with NEH funding, as well as records created by a retrospective conversion of our old card catalog carried out in 1999-2000 with funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The vendor who carried out this project (MARCLink, now called Backstage Library Works) created MARC records for all our 1801-1819 imprints not already in machine readable form. The vendor derived records from existing MARC records where possible; otherwise they simply keyed in the data on our old catalog cards, which are weak on bibliographic description and lack all added entries and subject headings. **For sample retrospective conversion records from WolfPAC, see Attachment 9.** The retrospective conversion records have embedded codes that identify records that are exact matches with existing MARC records, those accepted and copied despite differences in match points (Match Points Differ or MPD), and those that were not matched and therefore re-keyed from our catalog card (Original Entry or OE). These last two groups are the records that are the most suspect and/or the most incomplete. They have the greatest need for full cataloging or at least book in hand upgrading. Shaw & Shoemaker numbers appear on most WolfPAC records for American imprints of the 1801-1819 period, and sometimes the words "Not in Shaw & Shoemaker" appear, but in most cases where Shaw & Shoemaker could not be cited, that field was left blank.

The Project Cataloger will recatalog, book in hand, all records noted as Not in Shaw & Shoemaker, except those with previous MARC records created by LCP. Those that have no Shaw & Shoemaker note at all will be recataloged, book in hand, the OE records by the Project Cataloger and the MPD records by the Para-professional Cataloging Assistant.

Searching WolfPAC for all these terms is complicated, but once again the results allow us to pinpoint the imprints to be cataloged. Here are the numbers of imprints in each of the above categories, noting which are to be cataloged by the Project Cataloger (Prof.) and which by the Para-professional Cataloging Assistant:

	Professional	Para-prof.	TOTAL
Not in Shaw & Shoemaker: Original Entry (OE)	163		
Not in Shaw & Shoemaker: Match Points Differ (MPD)		76	
No Shaw & Shoemaker note: OE	1,387		
No Shaw & Shoemaker note: MPD		490	
Sub-total	1,550 +	566 =	2,116
Evans total	768 +	0 =	768
Grand total	2,318 +	566 =	2,884



### **C. Standards**

All cataloging will be performed following the national standards set forth in the second edition of *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* (AACR2, 2002 rev.); all descriptive cataloging will follow *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials-Books* (DCRM(B)). Copy-specific features for all materials cataloged at the item level will be described in the appropriate fields. Subject and name headings will be verified online in the Library of Congress's name and subject authority files with additional subject headings for graphics selected from *Thesaurus for Graphic Materials: Subject Terms*. The Library Company anticipates contributing names identified over the course of the project to the LC/NACO Authority File, as we are contributors through the Name Authority Cooperative (NACO) program. In addition to standard access points, catalogers will make added entries for selected genres and physical characteristics using terms selected from the thesauri for genre terms, provenance evidence, type evidence, paper terms, binding terms, and printing and publishing evidence published by the Association of College and Research Libraries. Bibliographic citations will follow the forms established by the Library of Congress.

The Library Company's records are stored in MARC format, in Unicode, the current standard format for bibliographic records, on a server in the care of Ex Libris, Ltd. Ex Libris runs daily backups and the system is monitored and managed so that records are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, with a committed level of monthly availability in excess of 98% of time between 7:00 am and 11:00 PM EST Monday to Saturday. Records created in RLIN have the additional security of a copy stored on RLG's or OCLC's servers.

For digital standards followed by Readex/NewsBank, see **Attachment 8**.

### **D. Storage and access**

Once they have been cataloged and conservation has been done as needed, these imprints will be integrated into the Library Company's American imprints collection, which is shelved chronologically and then by main entry, with separate sequences for folios, large broadsides, and small broadsides. They will be available in our reading room, which is open free of charge to any researcher. Our building is a modern structure about forty years old, with standard environmental controls. We maintain the building at 70 degrees and 50 per cent humidity around-the-clock, and our sprinkler system is fitted with on-off heads to limit the amount of water discharged during an incident. The building also has a sophisticated security system and is monitored by a central station when the building is closed. We have liberal access policies and do not require appointments or letters of introduction. The collections are regularly used by students (high school through doctoral candidates) and senior scholars, documentary film-makers, curators, and journalists. We have an active research fellowship program that awards fellowships to doctoral candidates and senior scholars.

#### 4. Work Plan

The NEH-funded **Project Cataloger** will work full-time for two years producing an estimated 2,318 original catalog records (see the table above). Over many years of grant-funded cataloging, we have averaged about 1200 records per cataloger per year, so we know this can be accomplished in the time allotted. Her work will be supervised by the Chief Cataloger

The Cataloger will be supported by a **Paraprofessional Cataloging Assistant**, whose job will be to locate the 2,884 imprints in WolfPAC and Zinnaip, using the searches outlined above in Methodology. She will then print out records, retrieve the materials, divide them into those needing original cataloging and those needing copy cataloging, and reshelve them after cataloging. All materials will be located from call numbers in existing catalog records; they are intershelved with other materials of the same chronological period in our stacks, clustered in three shelving areas (LCP, HSP, and Zinman imprints), each subdivided by format (books, small broadsides, large broadsides, and folios). Zinman imprints are now shelved by Evans number; they will receive new call numbers and be shelved with the main imprints collection. She will also do copy cataloging for 566 imprints (see table above), correcting any errors in the copy, usually where match points differ, and transcribing copy specific information where needed. She will devote 25% of her time to this project over two years, for a total of about 825 working hours. We estimate 45 minutes per record for copy cataloging (425 hours), 5 minutes per item for searching and paging 2,884 imprints (240 hours), and 3 minutes per item for reshelving (145 hours). She will work under the supervision of the Chief Cataloger. Her salary and benefits will be part of our cost share.

After cataloging, all 2,884 imprints will be evaluated for **conservation treatment** by a half-time **Conservation Assistant**. All conservation work will be part of the Library Company's cost share. This assessment and treatment is particularly important as a preliminary to digitization, which will begin at the conclusion of the catalog project. It is not practical to survey these materials before cataloging begins because they are mingled with other materials and cannot be identified on the shelves. They can only be evaluated after they have been searched and paged. We can, however, break down the conservation needs as follows.

A survey of the **Zinman Collection** was made at the time of acquisition, and it was determined that all broadsides and pamphlets need to be cleaned and rehoused, and minor repairs performed on about half of them. About half the bound books need enclosures and/or hinge repairs; and a portion of these, about 10%, require more complicated enclosures, such as clamshell boxes, or more labor-intensive repairs. About a third of the imprints are bound volumes. Assuming these proportions hold for the 368 Zinman imprints to be cataloged, we expect to need 250 pamphlets and broadsides dry cleaned and rehoused, at 30 minutes each (125 hours), 60 book enclosures and/or hinge repairs, at one hour each (60 hours), and 5 will require more labor-intensive treatment (25 hours) Total 210 hours.

The **Library Company's** pre-1820 imprints are the best cared-for in the collection, so we expect less conservation will be needed for approximately 1,400 LCP imprints to be cataloged. We estimate 200 cleaning and/or rehousings (100 hours), 150 book enclosures/and or hinge repairs (150 hours), and 10 labor-intensive treatments (50 hours). Total 300 hours.

The **Historical Society's** imprints (roughly 1,100) will require more work. The Society has not had book conservators on staff for many years, and has not been able to contribute financially to our conservation efforts, so the Library Company's staff has not devoted the resources to conserving the Society's materials as it has to conserving the Library Company's collections. The overall condition of materials is equivalent to that of the Zinman collection. Therefore their roughly 725 broadsides and pamphlets will mostly need rehousing and cleaning (365 hours), probably about 180 bound books will need enclosures or hinge repairs (180 hours), and 15 will need more labor-intensive treatment (75 hours). Total 620 hours.

In addition we estimate 10 minutes per imprint for evaluation and record keeping, for a total of 480 hours. In total this work will occupy a conservation assistant for 1,610 hours, which is nearly half time for two years. The Conservation Assistant will be one of our regular staff, and her work will be supervised by Jennifer Woods Rosner, Head of Conservation. The salary and benefits of the conservators will be part of our cost share. Supplies and materials for the 1,175 rehousings (acid-free envelopes or folders) and the 390 book enclosures (acid-free corrugated board), we have budgeted \$3,000. This sum is requested from NEH. (See the last worksheet of the **Budget, Attachment 4** for a breakdown of conservation supplies.)

## 5. Staff

The Library Company has a long tradition of excellence in book cataloging. Since the 1960s we have received grants from many sources to catalog books in various subject areas, including successfully completed grants from NEH to catalog our Afro-Americana Collection and our Education and Philanthropy Collection, and a grant now underway from NEH to catalog Civil War Era broadsides and ephemera (PA-50791-04). The grants helped us attract top rare book catalogers, many of whom – past and present employees – are now helping to set cataloging standards for the nation.

We anticipate that the project cataloger will be Holly Phelps. Ms. Phelps is very familiar to the Library Company as she has been engaged to work on numerous previous grant projects, including three NEH-funded projects, the most recent being the present Civil War era broadsides project. Ms. Phelps has a Library Science degree from UCLA and has been an active rare book cataloger for over twenty years. She has previously worked for the Rare Book Department of the Free Library of Philadelphia and she was one of the pioneer generation of catalogers for the Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalog, ESTC.

The paraprofessional cataloger will be Rachel D'Agostino, who helped process the Zinman collection shortly after its arrival and who is now working on the conversion of Zinnaip records to MARC format. She has a master's degree from the Harvard Divinity School and is currently enrolled in a master of library science program at Clarion University. For her résumé and those of other project staff, see **Attachment 7**.

Chief Cataloger Ruth Hughes will supervise both Ms. Phelps and Ms. D'Agostino. Ms. Hughes has worked here since 1995 and is currently managing our migration to a new integrated library system (Aleph 500). This will be our first cataloging project with the new system, which we expect will streamline both searching and cataloging.

The conservator will be Alice Austin, who has worked at the Library Company since 1999. Before that she worked in the conservation department at Winterthur. She is also a highly regarded book artist, represented in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and in several university library special collections, including Yale, Stanford, and the University of Pennsylvania. She will be supervised by Chief of Conservation Jennifer Woods Rosner, who has worked at the Library Company since 1980. She has a BFA in printmaking, supplemented by internships with the Folger Shakespeare Library and with bookbinder Trudi Eberhardt, and by classes in chemistry (Drexel University) and the history of the book (Rare Book School).

The Project Director will be the Library Company's Librarian James N. Green. He will monitor the overall progress of the project and coordinate the efforts of all staff at bi-weekly meetings. He has graduate degrees in American literature and library science, and he has worked at the Library Company since 1983. His research interest is in the history of printing and book publishing in America to 1825; he is a contributor to and member of the editorial board of the collaborative *History of the Book in America* published under the auspices of the American Antiquarian Society. See **Attachment 6** for his résumé.

## **6. Dissemination**

The records created in the course of this project will be freely accessible worldwide in the Library Company's online public access catalog, WolfPAC, and they will be loaded into the online RLIN database. They will also be the primary means of access digital images of the imprints and a fully searchable OCR text that will be published by Readex/NewsBank, Inc. as a supplement to their Early American Imprints Series I and II. The first series has been acquired by some 230 public, college, and research libraries in 47 of the 50 states and in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands, Japan, and China, plus a consortium of 85 German libraries.

These digital collections are revolutionizing the study and teaching of early American history and culture world-wide. The full text of some 90,000 books, pamphlets, and broadsides printed in America before 1820 is now available online, whereas before these texts had to be viewed in libraries using microform readers. But the real advance is the capacity to search an individual imprint or the entire digital archive for any given name, place, word or phrase. Many readers use this feature to find references to the subject(s) of

their research, but others are learning to use word searching to ask new kinds of questions. For example one scholar writes, "I spent an enormously productive week searching for uses of the word, 'ambition,' in American letters; a colleague of mine had an equally productive time with the term, 'Independence.' By allowing historians to organize words and concepts into rough chronological patterns, and by inviting them to explore the many uses and contexts of ideas-in-time, Readex has done early Americanists a huge favor." It is also having an impact on the way history and literature are taught. As Library Company fellow Sally Hadden (University of Florida) says, it "allows students to complete more complex research projects than they would otherwise attempt. The search features make finding related items simple and straightforward enough for even the beginning researcher to use." **For Sample Digital Evans search screens, see Attachment 11.**

Free text searching yields amazing results, but what we are finding at the Library Company is that most word searches yield too many results. This problem is compounded by the fact that the optical character recognition (OCR) software that Readex used to create the searchable text was not adequate to the sometimes poor quality of the microform images and to the vagaries of colonial typography. To compensate for this, the software was set to recognize a wide range of variables, with the result that any given word search yields many false hits. On the other hand, some words, especially proper names, were not recognized at all and don't turn up in searches. For all these reasons, the best way to use Digital Evans is to search it in combination with the MARC catalog records. For example one can use the MARC catalog to narrow the field down to a single work or group of works and then apply the word search. Keyword searching does not replace traditional cataloging; rather the two types of access need to be used together to realize the maximum potential of both.